1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
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621
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Key to Figure 6

Kaghai Names (see p. 107).

1. Kawar, 1st half.
2. Do., 2nd half.
3. Irapmeta.
4. Hitanggal.
5. Kurmelnar.
6. Rekarai.
7. Handawada, 1st half.
8. Do., 2nd half.
9. Ahekele, 1st half.
10. Do., 2nd half.

The letters against fields in nos. 2 and 3 and houses and granaries in nos. 1, 3, 9 and 10 refer to the tenants in the list below. Tenants A to N are Gume by clan, O to Q, Tamo.

(*Abbreviations.*—M = mother, W = wife, S = grown-up son, b = boy child, g = girl child, D = marriageable daughter.)

Letter	*Tenant*	*Family*	*Area in acres*	*Rent* Rs. a.
A	Modi s/o Malla	M., cousin's widow	5·00	2 4
B	Lalu s/o Banda, Bhum-gaita	W., 1 b.	4·50	1 12
C	Banda s/o Bursal	W., 2 g.	6·25	3 8
D	Horra s/o Musra	W., 1 g.	3·50	2 4
E	Masa s/o Kule, gaita	W., 1 S., 1 g.	7·50	4 12
F	Pido s/o Doga	W., 1 b.	3·50	2 0
G	Irpa s/o Karanje	W.	1·50	1 8
H	Rama s/o Peda Junga s/o Rama	W., 1 S., 2 g.	4·50	2 4 1 8
I	Kohla s/o Pahandi	W., 1 D., 1 man serving to win daughter's hand	4·00	1 8
J	Doga s/o Wijja	W., 1 b., 1 g.	4·00	1 12
K	Kuma s/o Boda	W., 1 g.	4·50	1 4
L	Juga s/o Wijja	M.	1·50	2 0
M	Malla s/o Gorra, Kasyeq-gaita a	W., 1 S., 1 b., 1 g.	5·50	2 4
N	Pahandi s/o Karanje	W., M.	2·50	2 12
O	Hara s/o Pandu	W.	3·00	2 4
P	Bandi s/o Kuli	W., M., 2 b.	5·00	2 12
Q	Musra s/o Pandu	W.	2·25	2 4
		Total Acres	68·50	Rs. 40 12
	There was also in Ahekele Kaghai no. 9 a house shared by a Rawat and a Telugu with a small tobacco plot paying 4 annas rent			4
				Rs. 41 0

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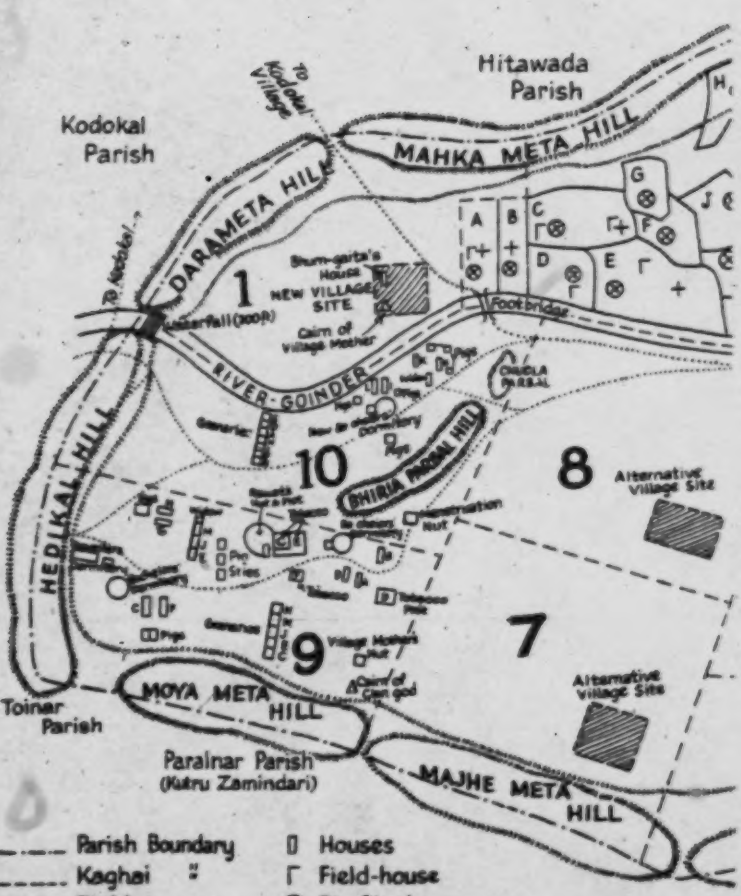

The buildings etc in Kaghai Nos 9 & 10 are of course drawn too large in comparison to the areas of the Fields in Nos 2 & 3; actually they left ample room for fields in Nos 9 & 10, but had become more scattered when those fields became exhausted

FIGURE 6
PARISH MAP OF HANDAWADA

[p. 108(A)]

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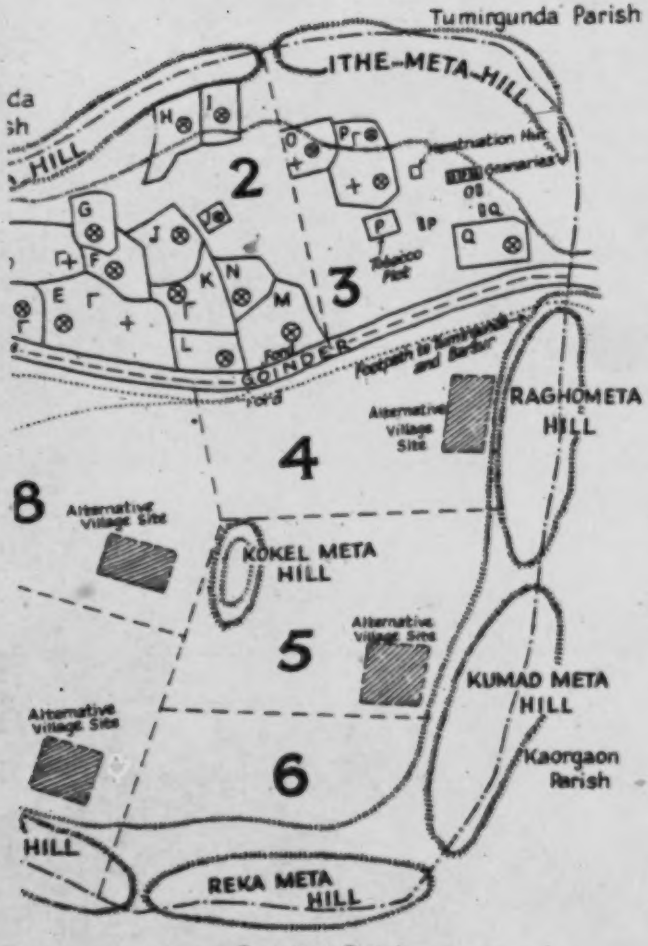

FIGURE 6
OF HANDAWADA

[p. 108(B)]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
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the few who grew it soon abandoned its cultivation and returned to the hill grains which the police would not eat. The second thing, even more potent than the demand for *bisaha* because of its universality, was the land revenue policy. In the remotest times the hill villages paid what little assessment the Chiefs imposed on them in kind, royal granaries being situated at centres like Barsur, Partabpur and Narainpur. There is no need to believe the picturesque story told first to Elliot in 1853 and since repeated by writers down to Russell and Hiralal, that 'their tribute to the Raja of Bastar, paid in kind, was collected once a year by an officer who beat a tom-tom outside the village and forthwith hid himself, whereupon the inhabitants brought out whatever they had to give and deposited it on an appointed spot'[1]; this is one of the typical tales with which the old State officials used to try to disguise their utter ignorance of every part of their charge except the handful of villages in their immediate vicinity. But in actual fact there was no regular assessment. The secular headman of the village (*gaita* or *peda*) collected as a rough poll-tax from every able-bodied male cultivator whatever he could fairly be called upon to contribute in kind, and delivered the village contribution at the royal granary. Even when the Chief in 1865 and 1872 attempted for the first time to settle villages with outside lessees and to assess the land revenue on the basis of fixed payments partly in cash and partly in kind for every plough, his officers made no effort to interfere with the traditional system in the Abujhmar hills. But after the State came under management in 1891, the authorities aimed at gradually introducing improved settlement methods based on the experience of British districts in the Central Provinces. The general method was to ascertain the rate per plough imposed at the late Raja's last settlement, to decide what enhancement per plough each village could bear, and then to ascertain the number of ploughs in each cultivator's possession and in the whole village. The number of ploughs was estimated from a rough calculation of the seed capacity of each field, and further checked by comparison with the number of cattle, counted when brought home to the village in the evening. In the better cultivated parts of Bastar, seed capacity of 7½ *khandis*[2] was regarded as a plough of land, and in the jungly parts seed capacity of 5½ *khandis*. Simultaneously, every effort was made to extend to all parts of the State the leasing of villages to *thekadars* or lessees, who were available in numbers in the open and settled parts and only too ready to seize the chance of getting the aboriginal

[1] Russell and Hiralal, Vol. III, p. 129.

[2] The Bastar *khandi* is a measure equivalent to 40 *pailis* or 160 *sali*; a *sali* contains 40 *tolas* or approximately 1 lb.'s weight of rice.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
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villages there for nothing, with the hope of appropriating the best village lands for themselves and getting them tilled by the forced labour of the villagers. The theory was that good and substantial cultivators from outside the State would bring capital and improved methods into Bastar and play something of the part played by the landlord in the development of English agriculture. In practice the *thekedari* system was the cause of untold harm even in the permanent villages of the State, where the alien *thekedar* destroyed the solidarity of village and tribal life besides mercilessly exploiting the aboriginals, whom indeed he goaded into rebellion in 1910. Luckily, I was able to secure its abolition for the future, and every opportunity has been taken to resume management of the villages through the headmen when a lease has fallen in or in cases of mismanagement.

When the authorities tried to apply the system to wild regions like the Abujhmar hills, fortunately for the Hill Marias their reputation as sorcerers was such, and their cultivation was so primitive, that no foreigners would take leases of their villages. There were hardly any ploughs, and the problem of estimating the seed capacity of *penda* plots on remote and steep hillsides was too much for the wits and energy of badly paid Hindu *patwaris*. A farcical record was, however, prepared of the number of 'hoe-ploughs' of land cultivated by each Hill Maria on the basis of a seed capacity assumed in nine cases out of ten by pure guess-work, the *patwari* and his superior officials never going near the villages. Individual assessments were then made on each man, in spite of the communal feeling in regard to the land. These assessments varied in their incidence without rhyme or reason, except that they had been based on guess-work. Men deserted their villages in large numbers and migrated into the Chanda part of the hills or into the Bastar zamindaris, with which the authorities were not so concerned. As it was felt that every good village should have a lessee, and no outsider would come near, the hapless headman of many a village was made to put his thumb-mark to a lease deed of his village, only to find himself in consequence legally responsible for the whole village assessment, even if his villagers had absconded or were unable to pay. The post of headman became one to be avoided or nominally given to the simpleton of the village, whom the villagers would put forward as a figurehead, while the *kasyap-gaita* retained the religious headmanship and was the real headman so far as the villagers were concerned. No allowance was made for the vagaries of shifting cultivation; though one year a man newly married or with a large growing family to support might be allowed by the village a larger *penda* area than others, and after a year or two

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
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same ceremonies and festivals are observed in connexion with cutting and firing of the *penda*, sowing, harvesting and first eating of the new crops. Most of the reaping of the 'big *kosra*' crops had been completed, but that of the '*os kosra*' millets and pulses was still in progress. For many of the *penda* plots in the current *kaghai* cultivation clearing (see p. 107) this was the second and last year of cultivation, and the *kuthi* crop raised was known as *hiwar*, a term, according to the *Gazetteer*,[1] always technically applied to these second year crops. I sent specimens of both *hiwar* and *kosra* or *kohala* (see p. 134) for identification to the Nagpur Agricultural College: botanically both were identical. These villages have never had the advantage of the special system of poll-tax assessment on every able-bodied axeman in the village which I devised for Bastar (p. 145). The system followed in these hill villages of Ahiri is roughly this. Each *penda* is cut by a number of villagers with the approval of the *gaita*, and the portion cut by each of them is roughly marked by one or other of the methods indicated on page 131. Help is taken from other villagers, who are always ready to give this mutual aid, and at harvest the produce is divided among the different share-holders of the *penda*, with something also for all who helped to clear the *penda*; sometimes a number of plots are specially earmarked for division of the produce by the *gaita* and elders amongst all who joined in clearing the whole *kaghai* and in watching and fencing the crops; a part of the produce is also allocated to villagers too old and feeble to work. The zamindar's *kamdar* or agent is paid rent, usually in kind, by the *gaita* for the whole village, for paying which the *gaita* takes a share of the produce of each *penda* plot. The village cultivation is in fact a truly co-operative enterprise.

I have alluded above to the arbitrary stopping in the plains Maria villages of the Chanda zamindaris of *dahi* cultivation, and the consequent increase of debt among the Marias. This Kuvakodi hill tract is fortunate, however, in having escaped this prohibition; it is the only Ahiri area where *penda* reigns undisturbed. It was therefore no surprise to find not a single case of old debt among the fifty or sixty Hill Maria cultivators who assembled at my camp from Kuvakodi and the other hill villages. Occasionally when crops are poor and the *kamdar* has to be paid rent in cash, the *gaita* goes to a Teli money-lender in the plains to borrow the money. But the villagers look on this as the debt of the whole village, not of the *gaita*, and though the Teli is as unscrupulous here as in any plains village in exacting high interest, yet the combined villagers are usually able to repay in kind in a year or two. Nowadays sometimes not only they, but even their Bastar neighbours, instead of resorting

[1] *Chanda District Gazetteer* (Allahabad, 1909), p. 170.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
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563 Pendri is now mainly a Marar village, its 451 inhabitants including only some forty Marias and sixty Halbas. They seem able to live in easy symbiosis with all Gonds, to whom they impart much of their agricultural skill. Their intrusion into these tribal areas, provided it is controlled, is therefore not a bad thing.

178 At Jharapapra there was a once familiar sight, the Halba log-god of the zamindari family, in type precisely similar to the clan-gods of the Hill Marias and the Halba log-gods at Chingnur near Bare Dongar and at other Halba centres in Bastar. The *Kutumb-Naik* headman of the Bare Dongar Halbas had told me in 1929 how some years before the then zamindar of Jharapapra had sent a party of Halbas to carry off the Chingnur log-god to Jharapapra, and how the god had resented this and 'flown' back to Chingnur from the first halting place of the god-snatchers.

000 Of the visits to Aundhi[1] and, next day, to Manpur[2] in Koracha zamindari and some way along the Manpur-Panabaras road, there is little to say except that, generally speaking, the Drug Court of Wards regime in Panabaras and Aundhi seemed to be progressive, and the Drug District Council to do more for the Partially Excluded Areas than its Chanda counterpart.

[167] In the four Partially Excluded zamindaris of Drug the aboriginals form well over sixty per cent. of the population. The worst feature of these estates is that there is a *thekadari* system, originally akin to that once prevalent in Bastar, and that many of the *thekadars*, especially those on whom the semi-permanent 'protected' status has been conferred, are non-aboriginal oppressors of the local Gonds and Marias, while comparatively few aboriginal headmen, except in Panabaras and Ambagarh-Chauki zamindaris, have been declared protected. The whole original conception was wrong in that it involved conversion of the tribal headman or *gaontia* into a lessee or *thekadar* of his village. Various examples have been given in *The Aboriginal Problem*[3] of the way in which these Maria headmen were thus transformed into *thekadars*, and then lost their villages in the great famines, or for other causes, to non-aboriginal intruders, who now rack-rent and oppress the surviving aboriginal tenants. We may give here one example, that of the village of Dokhla in Panabaras zamindari. This village was settled before 1861 by a Maria headman and ten other Marias. The headman absconded during the great famines at the turn of the century. Another Gond was then given the lease, but ultimately could not pay the lease-money and had to surrender the village.

[1] *Ordnance Survey of India*, Sheet 64D, ref. MQ5349.
[2] Ibidem, Sheet 64D, ref. MQ8366.
[3] Pp. 79-81.

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The Court of Wards finally gave the lease to a Hindu of the Kurmi caste, on a premium of Rs. 211. The present lessee, his son, was made protected in 1923. Though the aboriginals as a whole have not actually lost land since 1902, the lessee had been very oppressive, forcing the aboriginals who borrowed from him to surrender their fields to him and then selling them to new tenants. 427

In Panabaras the departmental working of the five teak forests, largely built up, as already stated, by the Court of Wards insisting from 1900 onwards on *podu* cultivators sowing teak-seed on their plots in the second year of cultivation, has done something on Allapilli lines to bring economic relief to the local aboriginals. These four estates have been special targets for the agrarian agitation already mentioned, which started from the adjacent non-excluded Dondi-Lohara zamindari and made a special feature of inciting the Gonds and Marias to burn *podu*. 313

In the Garchiroli zamindaris on the whole the Marias and other aboriginals continue to hold their own and to take gradually to permanent cultivation, though far more slowly than outsiders: in the twenty years after the 1922-3 settlement aboriginal cultivation had increased by only 23 per cent., but non-aboriginal by 50 per cent., there being 6,523 aboriginal tenants of 76,113 acres against 4,012 other tenants of 46,863 acres. The aboriginals still have miles and miles of land available for extending their cultivation, but always hanker after their beloved *podu*. 241 311

This *podu* question, as I have already said, was the principal topic at the conference of the Drug and Chanda Partially Excluded Areas zamindars at Murumgaon on New Year's Day, 1940. Other topics were the neglect of the Garchiroli zamindaris by the Chanda District Council, and the future of the zamindars, in view of the political threat to the whole zamindari system. To deal first with the last topic, let me say that while there may be much to be said for 'liquidation' of big landed estates, especially of absentee proprietors, the policy towards aboriginal zamindars should be different. Most of them are descendants of long lines of tribal chieftains holding estates on very ancient tenures dating back to the semi-tribal, semi-feudal systems[1] under which most of middle India was organized centuries ago. Properly speaking these chiefs in relation to their ryots and fellow tribesmen are *primi inter pares*. Some of the wealthier aboriginal proprietors of the huge Chhattisgarh estates may have aped the princeling: but most of the Chanda zamindars are closely akin to their people—the Rangi chief, for example, is frankly a Maria among Marias—and do their utmost to protect their ryots. Legally, so long as the proprietary rights in any 632

[1] See p. 4.

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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Murders connected with property are not generally committed for gain in the ordinary sense. They rather arise out of disputes about rights and privileges, and the actual murder is the result of anger and resentment rather than a desire for possession. In several cases indeed murder has been a form of self-defence against someone who tries to take away land or other property that the murderer believes to be his by right. Thus Marvi Buti was the elder brother of Marvi Chule, and for some time they lived in separate villages. Two years before the tragedy, Chule came to live next-door to his elder brother at Bara Gudra and got two of his fields and two tanks for irrigation. Chule cultivated them and paid two rupees as rent. Buti spent the money and when the time for the next payment came round, demanded and recovered four rupees from his younger brother. The following year Buti refused to give Chule any land at all. But Chule, claiming that he had already paid in advance for that year since he had actually paid six rupees and had only cultivated for one year, ploughed up the fields in spite of Buti's protests, and sowed grain in one of them. Buti countered this by giving the fields and the tanks to another brother who used the tanks, but was unable to get possession of the land. Then Buti threatened that he would drive the village cattle into the fields where Chule had sown his crop and would thus destroy it. Chule seems to have felt that it was no use carrying on the unequal struggle any longer, and he decided to leave the village and go elsewhere. He actually built a house in another village, and at the beginning of the rains went to move his possessions. When he reached his old house, he found one of his plantain trees cut down; he was told that Buti had been there and had cut the tree saying that he would cut down Chule in the same way. As he was removing his mahua seed from the building, someone came running to say that Buti was approaching with a knife in his hand. Chule got his axe and faced his enemy. Apparently Buti tried to run away, but Chule followed him and killed him.

674X 578

674X 578 427

Now here, although the tragedy arose out of a question about property, it is evident that Chule was not moved by the desire of gain. Indeed he had abandoned his claim to the fields in dispute, for he had already moved to another village where he would get new land. I think it is probable

674X